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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR MANAGING A DISTRIBUTED TRUST PATH
LOCATOR FOR PUBLIC KEY CERTIFICATES RELATING TO THE TRUST
5 PATH OF AN X.509 ATTRIBUTE CERTIFICATE

A method and a system is presented for managing
attribute certificates. An extension within an attribute
certificate, called a distributed trust path locator,
10 allows an attribute certificate to be physically
disassociated from its supporting public key certificates
while remaining logically associated with its supporting
public key certificates. The user's attribute
certificate and its supporting PKCs allows any server
15 using an attribute certificate to locate and retrieve the
PKC of the user and of the AC-issuing authority. The
user is not required to communicate his/her PKC to a
target service. In addition, configuring the target
service to accept attribute certificates does not require
20 the deployment of a PKC for every AC-issuing authority.